

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

February 11, 2009

Speaker Nancy Pelosi
H-232, US Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Majority Leader Steny Hoyer
H-107, US Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Majority Leader Hoyer:

Thank you for your leadership as we work towards passing an Economic Stimulus Package. As Members of the newly established Populist Caucus, we ask you to include strong "Buy American" language, and the extension of Trade Adjustment Assistance in the final version of H.R. 1, the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act*. These provisions are essential to protecting current American jobs, investing in American companies to create new jobs, and retraining American workers who have lost their jobs during these tough times.

The United States has lost millions of manufacturing jobs in the last number of years. Now, even high-tech jobs and service jobs are being off-shored to other countries. If we are to spend between hundreds of billions of dollars on infrastructure, we should make sure that the jobs created remain in the United States. America must retain its manufacturing economy and train its workers to meet the demands of new green manufacturing industries.

We believe for H.R. 1 to have the maximum stimulus effect, the House should insist on retaining its Buy American language for green schools and accept the Senate's broader Buy American language for public works. Sec 9301(j) of the House passed bill would create a Buy American requirement for iron and steel used in 21st century green high-performing public school modernization. Title XVI in the Senate bill includes a stronger Buy American provision for public works by including iron, steel and manufactured goods under its Buy American requirements.

We have an obligation to create jobs in America and it is essential we prevent taxpayer dollars from being off-shored. Many would argue that "Buy American" is nothing more than a trade protectionist label. However, it is perfectly legal under current trade agreements and many other nations use similar mechanisms to protect their domestic manufacturers. Therefore, we feel that it is entirely appropriate that this language be included in the final version of the bill, and we believe that this provision is essential to creating and retaining American jobs.

We also strongly urge you to extend Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) in the final stimulus package to save jobs and support American workers, communities, and farmers. TAA has not been reauthorized since 2002 and the demands of the current economic crisis on workers, coupled with increased competition from trade liberalization and the global expansion of the American economy, presents serious adjustment problems for the American worker. We must ensure that our workers are being retrained with highly marketable and relevant skills when jobs are lost. We should bolster this vital middle-class program to maintain stable families and keep our workforce competitive.

As members of the Populist Caucus, a Caucus committed to strengthening the middle class, we hope that you will take the necessary steps to strengthen the middle class by including strong "Buy American" language and extending Trade Adjustment Assistance in the final version of the Economic Stimulus Bill. Thank you again for your continued leadership and please feel free to contact any of us if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,



Bruce Braley
Chairman



Peter DeFazio
Vice Chair



Michael Arcuri
Vice Chair



Betty Sutton
Vice Chair



John Yarmuth
Member of Congress



Bob Filner
Member of Congress



Leonard L. Boswell
Member of Congress



Mike Michaud
Member of Congress

Phil Hare

Phil Hare
Member of Congress

Hank Johnson

Hank Johnson
Member of Congress

Steve Kagen, M.D.

Steve Kagen
Member of Congress

David Loeb sack

David Loeb sack
Member of Congress

Eric Massa

Eric Massa
Member of Congress